

D. Zebulon as a Trade and Service Center

The brighter side of the income picture is that the top 6.6% of Area families (with income of \$8,000 or more) accounted for 23.9% of total personal income, and the 38.8% with moderate (\$3,000 to \$7,999) incomes accounted for 54.5% of total income. Out-migration of large numbers of low-income families from the Area does not destroy the local business structure so long as families with adequate incomes continue to live and do business in Zebulon. Although a decline in low-income rural customers reduces business for firms selling staples (groceries, everyday clothing, and the like), increases in per family incomes of the remaining farm families will increase demand for more quality goods and services. Since Zebulon is already a major center for equipment and supplies, greater mechanization and consolidation of farms may be a good thing.

The map on the next page indicated the area from which people are likely to come to shop for most of their needs in Zebulon.

Given a total census tract income of \$4,813,000, in 1959, what is the sales performance record of local retail farms? A Zebulon Chamber of Commerce survey of local firms in 1958 confirms that Zebulon is more than holding its own. Retail sales were approximately 85% of total area income, indicating considerable spending by non-area residents, primarily those from rural areas in adjacent counties. The State proportion of 1958 retail sales to 1959 income, by comparison, was only 66.8%. Particularly high sales were registered by firms selling farm equipment, gasoline (due to Zebulon's location at intersections of several major highways), and food (one area in which the many low-income families were important contributors). Furniture, lumber, and hardware, and automobile sales were about normal. Sales were low, relatively, for drugs, eating places, general merchandise, apparel, and specialized goods, presumably representing shopping being done in Raleigh.

E. Guidelines for Future Economic Growth

Future efforts at economic development in the Zebulon area should be concentrated on specialized firms serving the Raleigh metropolitan area - - such as wholesale houses, large volume retail outlets, and components manufacturers. Such firms often require convenient access to the City they serve but wish to avoid the disadvantages of an urban location - - high land costs, traffic congestion, higher wages and construction costs.

While labor - intensive industries - - apparel, electronic wiring, etc., - - would bolster Zebulon's employment and income figures, long range stability could better be achieved by attracting firms that complement rather than compete with Raleigh's economic specialities.

Maintaining a high level of municipal utilities and services and encouraging quality standards in subdivision development will foster Zebulon's attraction as a residential center in the Raleigh metropolitan area.